

## Weekly Column for December 9, 2004

The snow came, and the snow went this week. Next time it would be nice if it could change over before hitting the ground. That would save us some money on salt and overtime. Well, we all know that is not going to happen.

But while the weather took a turn for the worse this week, it was absolutely gorgeous for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Victorian Stroll on Sunday. It was so exciting I hardly know where to begin.

First- the people. From Monument Square to River Street to Third Street, there were people everywhere. The estimation was more than 15,000. It sure looked like it, could have been more.

The shops were more than full. Everywhere you went, from Trink on River Street to the new Daily Grind on Third Street, stores were busy throughout the day. It was a similar situation with the restaurants in the downtown area. Even the Atrium was packed full of people with more than 70 craft vendors doing business. Everyone had a steady stream of people, packed to the roof with customers. It was just a terrific day.

The important thing about the Victorian Stroll however, is that we bring people into the downtown, and then get them to come back. In the past, people have come, but results were mixed as to how many came back and shopped again. And when did they shop?

From the City end of things we had the Action Team out working early on Sunday morning in an effort to put our best foot forward. You never know when someone will come into the City for the first time and fall in love. Whether the person is a millionaire or a middle class father of five, we welcome everyone and hope to show him or her what is so wonderful our City.

On Sunday I believe we did that. Not only was our best foot forward, but we had a tremendous turnout, terrific weather, a happy crowd filled with holiday spirit, and an exuberant group of merchants eager to show what they have to offer. I hope everyone had as much fun as I did.

Don't forget to tell all of your friends and family- forget the busy, crowded, annoying malls. Come to downtown Troy for all your holiday shopping needs.

See you next week.